(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken on these proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) In recent past, requests have been received for commencement of direct air services to Kanpur and Allahabad in particular. Air Deccan and Air Sahara are now operating regular air services to Kanpur and Allahabad, respectively. Consequently, the Indian Airlines, Jet Airways, Sahara Airlines and Air Deccan operate and provide air link to Lucknow, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Kanpur, Allahabad and Agra in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

However, Government does not decide air connectivity to specific places. The operators are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance with the Route Dispersal Guidelines laid down by the Government in this behalf.

Development of Civil Aviation Sector

114. SHRI BALAVANT *alias* BAL APTE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a comprehensive road map for the development of civil aviation sector is being prepared;

(b) if so, the outline thereof together with its present status;

(c) the details of the areas identified for focussed attention and thrust to make air travel affordable and hassle-free and also to improve the operation efficiency of the aviation industry so as to face competition from the private airlines; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken to ascertain the views of the various concerned interest in formulating the new road map?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Civil Aviation had constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Naresh Chandra, former Cabinet Secretary to prepare a roadmap for civil aviation sector that will provide the basis for a New National Civil Aviation Policy. The Committee had submitted the first part of the report on 08-12-2003 and second part on 02-11-2004. In consultation with the stakeholders in the aviation sector,

the draft of the National Civil Aviation Policy is presently under inter-ministerial consultation before being submitted to the Cabinet for approval.

Sale of AI and IA's equity to staff

115. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to sell Air India and Indian Airlines equity to staff and small investors; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including the percentage of equity proposed to be sold to each category, the price thereof and by when the proposal is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The proposals of Air India and Indian Airlines to go in for Initial Public Offering are under consideration of the Government.

Status of Pune Airport as an International Airport

†116. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to accord the status of international airport to Pune Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government are taking a decision to start air service between Pune and Sharjah keeping in view the large number of persons of the area employed in Gulf countries;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) There is a proposal for declaring Pune Airport as an nternational Airport, for which inter-ministerial consultations have been started.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.